News Release
Communiqué

Ontario

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

Ministère de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée

For Immediate Release
May 9, 2007
2007/nr-109

MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT CELEBRATES THE CREATION OF 8, 000 NEW NURSING POSITIONS

Latest Initiative Creates 1,200 New Permanent Full-Time Jobs for Registered Practical Nurses

TORONTO –The McGuinty government is fulfilling its commitment to create 8,000 new nursing positions in Ontario by adding 1,200 new full-time Registered Practical Nurse (RPN) positions in the long-term care sector, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

"Together with our health care partners, we're working to turn the nursing profession around," said Smitherman. "Our nurses are the heart of our health care system. Our government is listening to their advice on how to help them deliver quality care for Ontario's patients."

Smitherman announced today the government will invest $57.7M in annual funding to create the 1,200 positions and ensure at least one new RPN position in every one of 628 long-term care homes in Ontario. This initiative means that since coming into office, the McGuinty government has created 8,000 new nursing jobs in the province.

"We are pleased with the government's announcement to increase the number of RPNs in long-term care homes," said Dianne Martin of the Registered Practical Nurses Association of Ontario. "Today's announcement of new full-time RPNs will lead to better care for residents in long-term care homes while giving nursing graduates the chance to work in Ontario."

This initiative builds on the recently announced Nursing Graduate Guarantee initiative, which ensures full-time work opportunities for all 2007 Ontario nursing graduates. It is anticipated that many long-term care homes will take this opportunity to recruit graduates of RPN programs.

The McGuinty government has launched several initiatives designed to ensure that Ontario families continue to receive quality nursing care. These include:

- Enhancing work environments for nurses through more educational and professional career opportunities
- Keeping late career nurses in the profession while utilizing their knowledge, skills and experience to benefit the health care system
- Purchasing modern hospital equipment, such as patient lifts, to improve patient safety and working conditions for nurses

Today's initiative is part of the McGuinty government's plan for innovation in public health care, building a system that delivers on three priorities – keeping Ontarians healthy, reducing wait times and providing better access to doctors and nurses.

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Media Contacts:

David Spencer
Minister's Office
416-327-4320

David Jensen
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
416-314-6197

Members of the general public: 1-866-532-3161

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